AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 19, 23, 32 and 33 as follows:

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 18 wherein the biologically active substance is selected from the group consisting of [Lactobacilli] *Lactobacilli*, [Bifidobacterium] *Bifidobacterium*, [Enterococci] *Enterococci*, phytase, amylases, lipases, invertases, transglutaminases, proteases, lipoxygenases and pentosanases.

23. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is lyophilized before being introduced into the encapsulation vessel.

32. (currently amended) The method of Claim 31 wherein the biologically active substance is selected from the group consisting of [Lactobacilli] *Lactobacilli*, [Bifidobacterium] *Bifidobacterium*, [Enterococci] *Enterococci*, phytase, amylases, lipases, invertases, transglutaminases, proteases, lipoxygenases and pentosanases.

33. (currently amended) The method of Claim 32 wherein the biologically active substance is [Lactobacillus] *Lactobacillus* acidophilus.

Please cancel Claims 35-62.

STATUS OF CLAIMS:

1.(original) A method of encapsulating a sensitive material comprising: plating the sensitive material onto a solid carrier, in an atmosphere inert to the sensitive material, to form a plated material; and encapsulating the plated material.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or helium.

3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the solid carrier is chilled prior to plating with the sensitive material.

4. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein the solid carrier is chilled by liquid nitrogen.

5. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the solid carrier is porous or semi porous.

6. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein the solid carrier is maltodextrin, silicon dioxide, starches and starch derivatives, gums, or hydrocolloids.

7. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the encapsulation occurs in an atmosphere inert to the sensitive material.

8. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is oxygen-free.

9. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or helium.

10. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material has a boiling

point of between about 40°F and 250°F.

11. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is oxygen-free.

12. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is sprayed onto the solid carrier.

13. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising encapsulating the plated material with a melted encapsulant.

14. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the percentage of encapsulant in the resulting encapsulated particles is between about 10 to about 90%.

15. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein the percentage of encapsulant in the resulting encapsulated particles is between about 20 to about 80%.

16. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is a volatile material.

17. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is an oxygen sensitive material.

18. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is a biologically active substance.

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 18 wherein the biologically active substance is selected from the group consisting of *Lactobacilli*, *Bifidobacterium*, *Enterococci*, phytase, amylases, lipases, invertases, transglutaminases, proteases, lipoxygenases and pentosanases.

20. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the sensitive material is at least one selected from the group consisting of alcohols, acetones, ketones, aldehydes, organic acids, and antioxidants.

21. (new) A method of encapsulating a sensitive material comprising:

introducing the sensitive material into an encapsulation vessel, wherein the atmosphere in the encapsulation vessel is inert to the sensitive material; and

encapsulating the sensitive material.

22. (new) A method according to Claim 21 wherein the encapsulating comprises spraying a coating into the encapsulation vessel.

23. (new) A method according to Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is lyophilized before being introduced into the encapsulation vessel.

24. (new) The method of Claim 21 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or helium.

25. (new) The method of Claim 21 wherein the atmosphere inert to the sensitive material is oxygen-free.

26. (new) The method of Claim 21 wherein the percentage of encapsulant in the resulting encapsulated sensitive material is between about 10 to about 90%.

27. (new) The method of Claim 26 wherein the percentage of encapsulant in the resulting encapsulated sensitive material is between about 20 to about 80%.

28. (new) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is a volatile material.

29. (new) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material has a boiling point of between about 40° F and 250° F.

30. (new) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is an oxygen sensitive material.

31. (new) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is a biologically active substance.

32. (new) The method of Claim 31 wherein the biologically active substance is selected from the group consisting of *Lactobacilli*, *Bifidobacterium*, *Enterococci*, phytase, amylases, lipases, invertases, transglutaminases, proteases, lipoxygenases and pentosanases.

33. (new) The method of Claim 32 wherein the biologically active substance is *Lactobacillus* acidophilus.

34. (new) The method of Claim 21 wherein the sensitive material is at least one selected from the group consisting of alcohols, acetones, ketones, aldehydes, organic acids, and antioxidants.

Claims 35-62 (cancelled)